

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A charge information processing apparatus for calculating charges required for working as a franchisee that provides automobile repairing services by a specific repairing method, comprising:

means for inputting scale information of a repair shop into said charge information processing apparatus; and

means for calculating introduction expenses required for facilities working as the franchisee providing the automobile repairing services by the specific repairing method, based on said scale information of a repair shop inputted into said charge information processing apparatus by said inputting means, and for calculating an instruction fee of said specific repairing method, a royalty, and prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method;

means for managing information of franchisees;

means for managing a number of franchisees for each region; and

means for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by said means for managing a franchisee-number managing device of franchisees.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said specific repairing method comprises procedures associated with a repairing method, repairing instruments, and repairing materials that are devised to complete repairs within a predetermined amount of time.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said specific repairing method comprises procedures associated with a repairing method, repairing instruments, and repairing materials that are devised to perform repairs for predetermined charges.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said specific repairing method includes a repairing process in which usage amounts of repairing materials are defined.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said repairing instruments are provided with at least one measuring device for measuring repairing materials in amounts corresponding to said usage amounts.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said repairing method includes a repairing process in which usage duration of said repairing instruments is defined.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said repairing instruments are provided with at least one timing device for timing such that usage of said repairing instruments is finished within said usage duration.

10. (Cancelled).

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising:

a ~~first repairing material inventory managing device~~means for managing inventories of repairing materials to be supplied to franchisees.

12. (Currently Amended) A-~~The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising:

~~an instructing material inventory managing device~~means for managing inventories of instructing materials for instructing franchisees on said specific repairing method.

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Currently Amended) A-~~The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising:

~~a sales information acquiring device~~means for acquiring sales information of franchisees;

~~a gross sales managing device~~means for managing the gross sales information of franchisees acquired by said means for acquiring sales information ~~acquiring device~~of franchisees;

~~a gross sales estimating device~~means for ~~calculating~~ estimating gross sales estimation in a predetermined period based on the sales information that is managed by said ~~gross sales managing device~~means for managing the gross sales information of franchisees; and

~~a demand estimating device~~means for estimating demands of repairing materials based on the ~~gross sales estimation~~ calculated results from said ~~gross sales estimating device~~means for estimating gross sales in a predetermined period.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said means for acquiring sales information ~~acquiring device~~ of franchisees acquires sales information from an ~~estimation apparatus that calculates estimations~~ a means for calculating estimates for automobile repairing services by said specific repairing method via at least one communicating device.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said information inputted into said charge information processing apparatus comprises scale information of a repair shop, and said charge information processing apparatus further comprises:

~~an introduction plan information preparing device~~ means for preparing introduction plan information required for facilities working as said franchisee based on the scale information of the repair shop inputted by said means for inputting ~~device~~ scale information of said repair shop.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said means for calculating ~~device~~ introduction expenses calculates the introduction expenses based on the introduction plan information prepared by said ~~information~~ means for preparing introduction plan information ~~preparing device~~.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said ~~charge~~ means for calculating ~~device~~ estimates for automobile repairing services calculates an amount totaling the introduction expenses, the instructing fee, the royalty, and the prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials.

20. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising:

~~a notifying device~~means for notifying a charge collection handling agent of a request for collection handling of ~~the~~a total amount.

21. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 19 further comprising:

~~an outputting device~~means for outputting the introduction expenses, the instructing fee, the royalty, the prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials, and the total amount thereof calculated by said ~~charge~~means for calculating device estimates for automobile repairing services after editing them in a predetermined document format.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said means for outputting device estimates for automobile repairing services is an image display apparatus.

23. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said means for outputting device estimates for automobile repairing services is a printer.

24. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The charge information processing apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said predetermined document format is one of an estimate format and an invoice format.

25. (Currently Amended) A franchise system apparatus comprising:

a charge information processing apparatus included in the franchise system apparatus for calculating charges required for working as a franchisee that provides automobile repairing services by a specific repairing method;

an estimation apparatus included in the franchise system apparatus for calculating ~~estimations~~ estimates of the automobile repairing services ~~of by~~ said specific repairing method; and

a ~~communicating device~~ communication apparatus included in the franchise system apparatus for communicating data between said charge information processing apparatus and said estimation apparatus,

wherein said charge information processing apparatus comprises an input ~~device~~ apparatus for inputting scale information of a repair shop into said charge information processing apparatus;

a ~~franchisee information managing device~~ means for managing information of franchisees;

a ~~franchisee number managing device~~ means for managing the number of franchisees for each region;

a ~~branching plan information preparing device~~ means for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by a ~~franchisee number managing device~~ said means for managing information of franchisees; and

a ~~charge calculating device~~ means for calculating introduction expenses required for facilities providing said automobile repairing services, based on scale information of a repair shop, an instructing fee for instructing said specific repairing method, a royalty, and prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method.

26. (Currently Amended) A ~~The~~ franchise system apparatus according to claim 25, wherein said estimating apparatus is further provided with a second ~~repairing material inventory managing device~~ means for managing inventories of repairing materials owned by franchisees.

27. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The franchise system apparatus according to claim 26, wherein said estimation apparatus is further provided with ~~an order information outputting device~~ means for outputting information for ordering repairing materials.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The franchise system apparatus according to claim 27, wherein said estimation apparatus is further provided with ~~a sales managing device~~ means for managing information on sales by providing the automobile repairing services based on said specific repairing method.

29. (Currently Amended) A charge information processing apparatus for calculating introduction expenses required for facilities working as a franchisee that provides automobile repairing services by a specific repairing method, comprising:

~~a storage apparatus included in said charge information processing apparatus~~ means for storing charge calculation base data for calculating introduction expenses corresponding to scale information of an automobile repair shop;

~~an inputting device~~ means for inputting the scale information of the automobile repair shop into said charge information processing apparatus; ~~a franchisee information managing device~~

means for managing information of franchisees;

~~a franchisee number managing device~~ means for managing the number of franchisees for each region;

~~a branching plan information preparing device~~ means for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by ~~a franchisee number~~ said means for managing device ~~the number of franchisees~~; and

~~a charge calculating device included in said charge information processing apparatus~~ means for calculating the introduction expenses based on the inputted scale information of a repair shop and said charge calculation base data stored in said ~~storage apparatus~~ means for storing charge calculation base data;

wherein said charge calculation base data comprises:
calculating an instruction fee for said specific repairing method;
calculating a royalty, and
calculating prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method.

30. (Currently Amended) A ~~The~~ charge information processing apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said charge calculation base data is an introduction plan table associating the scale information of the repair shop with introduction plan information, and a charge list, and said ~~charge calculating device~~ means for calculating the introduction expenses reads out introduction plan information corresponding to the inputted scale information with reference to said introduction plan table, and calculates the introduction expenses based on the read out introduction plan information and the charge list.

31. (Cancelled).

32. (Cancelled).

33. (Cancelled).

34. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for obtaining introduction expenses required for a franchisee providing auto repairing services according to a specific repairing method, comprising the steps of:

inputting scale information of an automobile repair shop into a charge information processing apparatus;

comparing said scale information to introduction plan information stored in said charge information processing apparatus, wherein a determination is made of

which items from said introduction plan information are required to be introduced into said repair shop; and

calculating the introduction expenses based on at least data obtained from said comparison between said scale information and said introduction plan information, and information included in charge calculation base data stored in said charge information processing apparatus wherein said charge calculation base data comprises:

calculating an instruction fee for said specific repairing method;

calculating a royalty, and

calculating prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for implementing said specific repairing method, such that introduction expense data is readily available;

wherein said charge information processing apparatus further comprises:

means for managing information of franchisees;

means for managing a number of franchisees for each region; and

means for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by a franchisee number managing device.

35. (Currently Amended) A computer program, ~~which can be stored on a recordable medium, for controlling a computer, the program comprising:~~

means for accepting scale information of an automobile repair shop entered via an input apparatus and storing said scale information in a storage apparatus; and

means for managing information of franchisees;

means for managing a number of franchisees for each region;

means for outputting information for preparing a branching plan based on the number of franchisees for each region that are managed by a franchisee number ~~managing device~~said means for managing a number of franchisees;

means for calculating introduction expenses based on said inputted scale information and charge calculation base data stored in said storage apparatus;

wherein said charge calculation base data comprises:
calculating an instruction fee for said specific repairing method;
calculating a royalty, and
calculating prices of repairing instruments and repairing materials required for
implementing said specific repairing method.